

Fullersburg Bridge
(Brush Hill Bridge)
(York Road Bridge)
Spanning Salt Creek at York Road
(County Highway 8)
Village of Oak Brook
DuPage County
Illinois

HAER No. IL-140

HAER
ILL
22-OAKB,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
Rocky Mountain System Support Office
National Park Service
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225-0287

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

FULLERSBURG BRIDGE

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I. INTRODUCTION

Location: Spanning Salt Creek at York Road (County Highway 8),
Oak Brook, Illinois

USGS Hinsdale Quadrangle, T39N, R11E, S36, QSE
Zone 16 Easting 423100 Northing 4629980

Date of construction: 1924

Present owner: DuPage County
Division Of Transportation
130 N. County Farm Road
Wheaton, Illinois 60189-0298

Present use: Vehicular bridge to be replaced by a new bridge with a
wider cross-section to handle vehicular traffic volumes and
also provide separate lanes for pedestrian, bicycle and
equestrian traffic.

Significance: The Fullersburg Bridge is a three span, T-beam bridge,
made of reinforced concrete deck girder, constructed
during the period of significance of Graue Water Mill.
Graue Water Mill was built between 1847 and 1852 and
became inactive between 1924 and 1929. Fullersburg
Bridge is within the Graue Water Mill Historic Site
boundaries. HABS documentation for the nearby Graue
Water Mill is in the Library of Congress
(HABS No. IL-26-6).

II. HISTORY

A. FULLERSBURG

The Fullersburg Bridge takes its name from the first settlements in DuPage County. In 1833, at what is now the intersection of Ogden Avenue and York Road, a settlement that was later known as Fullersburg came into existence. Beginning in 1835, the Benjamin Fuller family settled in the area and gradually bought up land. Mr. Fuller had it platted and it became known as the town of Fullersburg. Fullersburg's location, one day's travel from Chicago, made it the perfect place to serve as a trading center as well as a way station for travelers. Regular stagecoach service between Chicago and Fullersburg was established by 1836. Traffic became so heavy that a toll house was erected at the eastern edge of Fullersburg near the county line. Five hundred horse and oxen teams passed by the toll house each day. Local businesses thrived during this period. Cattle herds on their way to market were also driven through town on their way to Chicago. Ogden Road, one of the main streets of Fullersburg, and once an ancient Indian trail, became the main route west out of Chicago with such notable travelers as Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas. Lincoln spoke in Fullersburg in 1858 on his way west to Ottawa, Illinois.

By 1860, Fullersburg, was one of the foremost towns in DuPage County. The community consisted of fifteen to twenty houses, two hotels, three taverns, a post office, a blacksmith shop, a school, a cemetery and the Graue Water Mill. In 1865, the railroad came to the area. Unfortunately for Fullersburg, it was a mile to the south of town. Traffic and business rapidly declined as the new center of business and trade became the village of Hinsdale.

Despite recent development, many of the original buildings of Fullersburg stand today. The Fullersburg Cemetery is still used today and several original historic buildings exist. These buildings are part of a restoration project to preserve the heritage of DuPage County by the Fullersburg Historic Foundation. The five major structures to be renovated are:

Church on the County Line-built in 1878, it continues to be used as a house of worship.

York Tavern-built in the 1840s by Ben Fuller, it was also a general store. The Fullersburg Historic Foundation has plans to acquire the building after its permit to operate as a tavern expires in 1996.

Ben Fuller House-built in the 1840s, by Ben Fuller, it has the distinction of being one of the oldest remaining balloon frame buildings in the world.

Graue Homestead-built around 1860 as the residence for the owner of Graue Mill.

The home is located just south of the mill.

Graue Mill-built in 1852 by Frederick Graue. This mill is the only working grist mill in Illinois. The mill was also used as a station for the pre-Civil War "underground railroad". In 1951, the DuPage Graue Mill Association restored the mill and created a museum in it that is still in use today .

Along with these buildings, reconstruction is planned for the Fullersburg schoolhouse. A visitor's orientation center, as part of the Ben Fuller homestead, will also be developed as part of the historic restoration plan.[1]

B. THE GRAUE WATER MILL

The Graue Water Mill is of particular interest because it is listed as part of the Historic American Buildings Survey in the Library of Congress (HABS No. IL-26-6). It became part of the National Register in 1975. The Graue Water Mill sits on the south bank of Salt Creek, about one hundred feet to the west of York Road, and is part of the Fullersburg Forest Preserve. Fullersburg Bridge is also included within the Fullersburg Forest Preserve which is owned and operated by DuPage County.

Graue Water Mill ground wheat for flour, corn, oats and buckwheat. The mill was run by water power until 1916. At that time, a steam boiler and engine were installed, which furnished power until 1924. As the milling industry became more consolidated, business dropped off and the mill was sold by the Graue family to Frank Butler, a paper manufacturer.[2]

It should be noted that conflicting information exists regarding the closing of Graue Mill. The HABS report (HABS No. IL-26-6) states that 1924 was the last year of operation of the mill, while the National Register Of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form gives 1929 as the last year of operation of Graue Mill. The inactive mill was later turned over to the DuPage Forest Preserve District, and in 1952 it became a working grist mill once again, for visitors of the new museum on the premises.[2,3]

C. FULLERSBURG BRIDGE

Beginning in the late 19th century, engineers began to develop bridges made of reinforced concrete. Strong in compression and tensile strength, they created some designs that were

innovative and beautiful. Also, these types of bridges could be made from local resources. Sand, gravel and cement could have been obtained from local quarry operations, thereby allowing the bridge construction to feed the local economy. Because the reinforced concrete bridges were more attractive than steel trusses, they were often selected for urban settings or in this case, for a site that was appealing or pleasing to the eye.[4]

Illinois Department of Transportation documentation indicates that the Fullersburg Bridge was constructed in 1924. The agency and contractor of the bridge are unknown. It is unclear if the Fullersburg Bridge was constructed solely for access to the Graue Water Mill since according to the HABS documentation, the Graue Water Mill ceased operation in 1924. However, it should be noted that the National Register Of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form extends the operation and the period of significance of the Graue Water Mill until 1929. Despite this discrepancy, Fullersburg Bridge is included within the Graue Water Mill Historic Site boundaries (see location map, page 10).

Fullersburg Bridge is a reinforced concrete deck girder bridge using T-beam construction. Like the more popular I-beam construction, T-beam construction involves a rolled-steel joist, but instead of being tall and narrow, it is composed of a *stalk* and *table*. The *stalk* is the vertical part of a reinforced-concrete retaining wall and the *table* is the central outstanding part of a *tee-beam*. This type of construction is often used for short highway bridges.[5]

Fullersburg Bridge has three spans, a total length of 159 feet, and a roadway width of 28.8 feet. The bridge is anchored at both ends by cement abutments, or wing walls. The bridge platform is supported by two piers sunk into the creek bed (for detailed bridge construction

specifications see photographs of the original bridge plans IL-140-13 through IL-140-15). One of the most appealing features of the bridge is the red brick side walls which are similar to the red brick walls of the Graue Water Mill. An interesting cut-out cross design is repeated within the brick walls approximately every six feet. Four concrete insert panels, located at either end of the bridge and over the two piers, interrupt the monotony of the design and add detail. Also, four decorative amber lamps on light poles were constructed at the four corners of the bridge. At the southern end of the bridge, looking north, a small concrete engraving identified the bridge as Brush Hill Bridge and county (see photographs IL-140-1 through IL-140-12).

The condition of the fabric of the bridge is poor, with structural damage and missing bricks along the walls of the bridge, as well as extensive damage to the bridge foundation. Exposed and rusted rebar is visible, as well as underside bridge deck deterioration. Additionally, a steel plate has been installed in the deck of the bridge above the north pier. Rehabilitation would require a complete replacement of the superstructure and pier modifications for possible stream erosion.

Fullersburg Bridge was used to cross Salt Creek and to gain access to Graue Water Mill, and continues to be used today. It is believed that a new bridge, with more and better safety features, will be of better use to this historic site and to the public. The new bridge will be built wider to handle vehicular traffic and will also provide separate lanes for the safety of pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian traffic. In keeping with the character of the site, ornamental lighting and brick walls with steel handrails will be included on the new bridge.[6]

III. ENDNOTES

1. Fullersburg Historic Foundation, Historic Fullersburg (Oak Brook, Illinois: Publisher and date unknown), 1-4.
2. U.S. Department of the Interior, Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), No. IL-26-6, "Graue Water Mill," January 20, 1934. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
3. Ted Hild, "Graue Mill National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, pgs. 2- 3, January 9, 1975. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Washington, D.C.
4. Donald Jackson, Great American Bridges And Dams (Washington, D.C.:The Preservation Press, 1988), 35-39.
5. John S. Scott, The Dictionary of Civil Engineering. Fourth Edition (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1993), 449.
6. " Section 106 Documentation of Adverse Effect Replacement of Structure 022-3008 County Highway 8 York Road Bridge (Fullersburg Bridge) Over Salt Creek Section: 93-00293-00-BR Structure Number: 022-3008". Illinois Historic Preservation Agency Log Number: 09071494. Illinois historic Preservation Agency, 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Springfield, Illinois 62701-1507.

IV. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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U.S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey. Hinsdale Quadrangle: Illinois--Oak Brook. 7.5 Minute Series. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1972.

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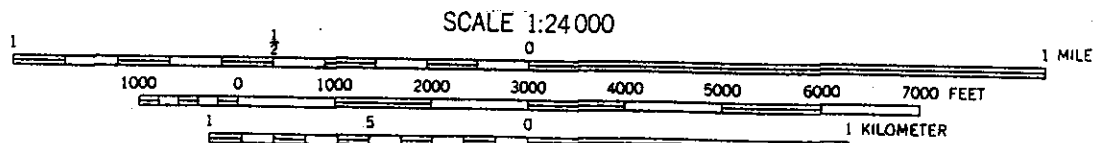
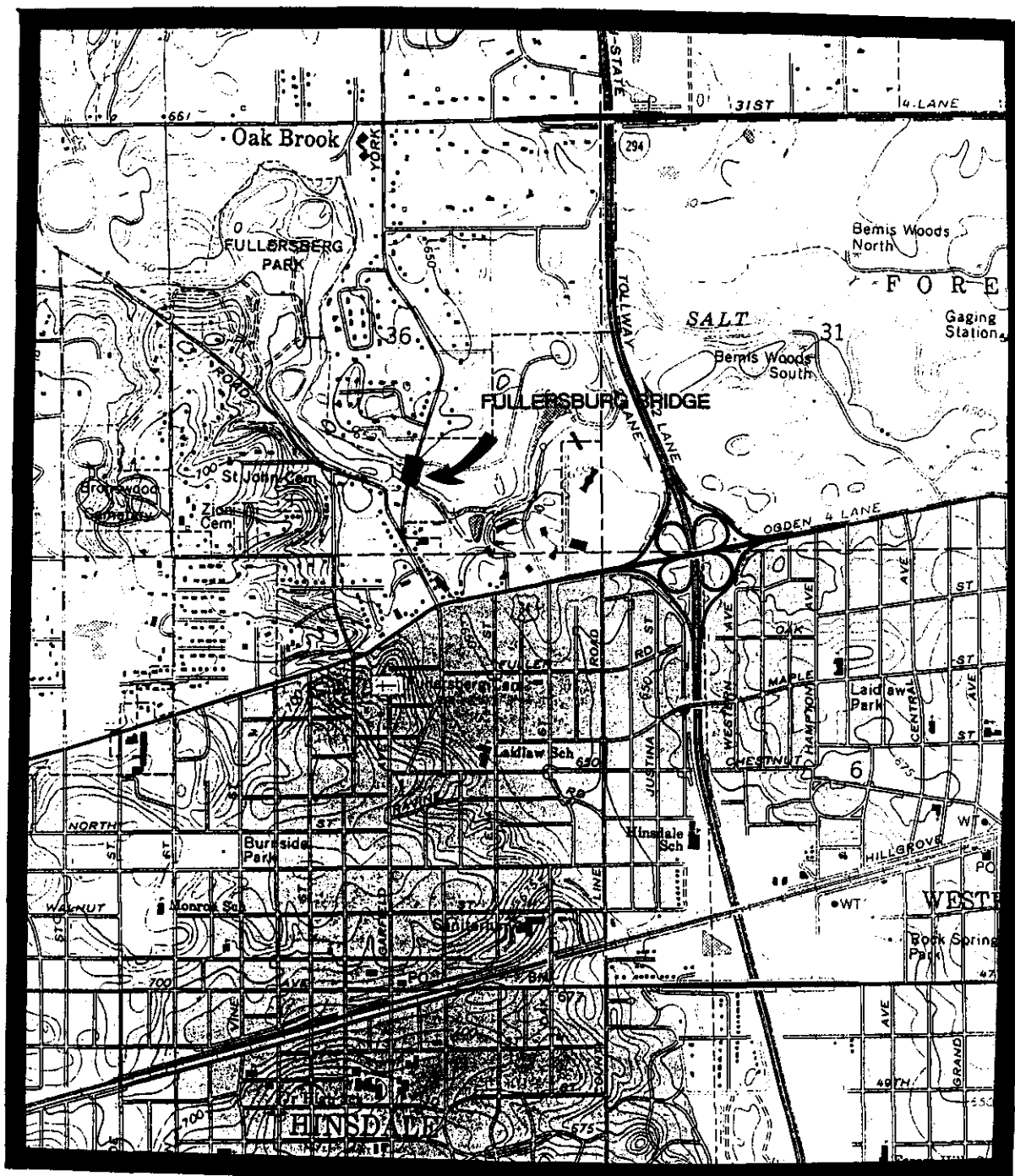
V. PROJECT INFORMATION

This document was prepared for DuPage County, Division of Transportation, pursuant to Section 106 compliance requirements for a project that will affect the Fullersburg Bridge. The bridge is slated for demolition. DuPage County, Division of Transportation, contracted Archaeological Research, Inc. For HAER documentation. Key personnel included: Patricia Hamlen and Karen Poulson, staff researchers, Karen Spreitzer, staff editor and David Keene, principal investigator. Photographs and negatives were provided by Jerry Jacobson, IDOT photographer, and photographic negatives of the bridge plans were provided by Ron Gordon.



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HINSDALE QUADRANGLE
ILLINOIS
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



CONTOUR INTERVAL 5 FEET
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